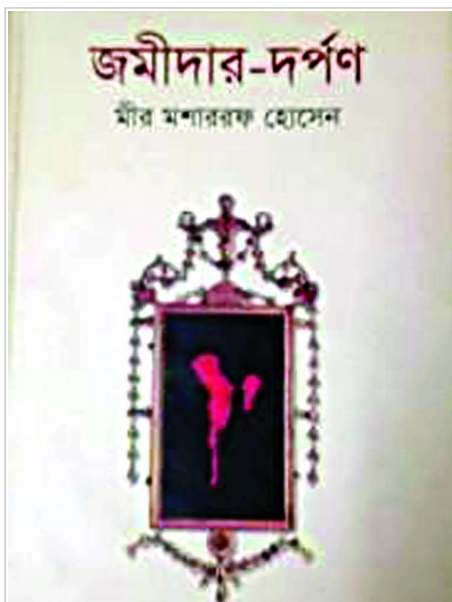
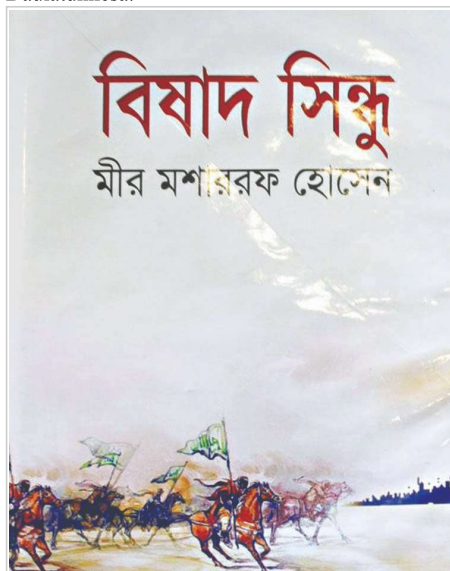


The first novelist to emerge from the Muslim society of Bengal -The Asian Age



Mir Mosharraf Hossain was a well known Bengali novelist, playwright and essayist in 19th century Bengal. His famous novel is 'Bishad Sindhu' which brought name and fame to him. Mir Mosharraf Hossain was born in the village of Lahinipara in Kumarkhali under Kushtia District on 13 November 1847. In spite of being Lahinipara his birthplace, he spent most of the time of his life in Padamdi in Baliakandi under Rajbari district. His father's name is Mir Moazzem Hossain who was an aristocrat Muslim zamindar (landlord). His mother's name is Daulatunnesa.



From childhood, Mosharraf Hossain had interest in learning. He learned Arabic and Persian with a teacher at home and then he also learned Bangla at a pathshala. He started his formal education at Kushtia School and then studied up to Class V at Krishnanagar Collegiate School. After that he was admitted to Kalighat School in Kolkata but could not complete his studies. His career started with the looking after of his father's landed property. Later on, he served the Faridpur Nawab Estate and, in 1885, the Delduar Estate.



He married his first wife Aziz-un-Nesa in 1865. But he was not happy

with her. That unhappy couple life led him to remarry in 1874. The name of his second wife was Bibi Kulsum.

Hossain started writing when he was a boy of thirteen or fourteen and kept writing until his death. His contribution to Bangla literature is significant for a number of reasons. He mostly wrote on popular themes in the history and belief of Islam.

While still a student, Mosharraf Hossain worked as a mofussil reporter for the Sangbad Prabhakar (1831) and Gram Barta Prokashika (1863). His literary career started here. Mir Mosarraf Hossain's masterpiece is 'Bishad Shindhu' that depicts the tale of Martyrdom of Hasan and Husayn in Karbala. He was one of the first Muslim writers to emerge from colonial British India. His other works include Jamidar Darpan (Reflections on Zamindars, a play on the plight of common people under the Zamindars (landlords installed by the British colonial rulers) and their struggle against them.

His literary works were included in the curriculum of school level, secondary, higher secondary and graduation level Bengali Literature in Bangladesh. Mosharraf Hossain was a pioneer among nineteenth-century Bengali Muslim writers. His first novel, Ratnavati, was published in 1869. Apart from novels, Mosharraf Hossain wrote poetry, plays, textbooks and an autobiography. Among his works are Gauri-Setu (1873), Basantakumari Natak (1873), Zamindar Durpun (1873), Er Upay Ki (1875), Bishad Sindhu (1885-1891), Sabgit Lahari (1887) Go-Jiban (1889), Behula Gitabhinay (1889), Udasin Pathiker Maner Katha (1890), Tahmina (1897), Tala Abhinay (1897), Niyati Ki Abanati (1889), GAZI MIYAR BASTANI (1899), Maulood Sharif (1903), Mussalmander Babgala Shiksha (2 parts, 1903, 1908), Bibi Khodejar Bibaha (1905), Hazrat Omarer Dharmajiban Labh (1905), Madinar Gaurab (1906), Bajimat (1908), Amar Jibani (1908-1910), Amar Jibanir Jibani Bibi Kulsum (1910) etc.

Bisad Sindhu, which narrates the tragic tale of the battle of Karbala, is considered to be his masterpiece. Zamindar Durpun was written against the background of the peasant riots in SIRAJGANJ during 1872-73. In much of his writing, Mosharraf Hossain satirized the follies and vices of contemporary society. In Gazi Miyar Bastani, for example, he criticized the chaos and corruption of nineteenth-century Bengal in general and the increasing freedom of women in particular, which he believed led to loose living.

Mosharraf Hossain was outspoken and free from communal prejudices. He did not hesitate to take up positions that would make him unpopular among his own community. He believed that the indiscriminate slaughtering of cows would endanger agriculture and accordingly, wrote the essay 'Gokul Nirmul Ashabka', against this practice. This great artist died in 1912.

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